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THE FORT DONELSON VICTORY.  
ADDITIONAL DETAILS.

## OPERATIONS OF THE LAND FORCES.

The Brilliant Charge of Lan-  
man's Brigade.

## THE CAPTURE OF THE RIFLE PITS.

THE FIRE EATERS OF THE WEST,  
&c., &c., &c.

(Correspondence of the Chicago Tribune, Feb. 19.)  
The army made no movement Friday of consequence, but waited any demonstration the rebels might make. The latter were elated with the repulse of the gunboats, and undoubtedly concluded that they would either repulse the army, or if not that they would cut their way through and escape to Clarksville.

Prepared to do either, as circumstances might decide, at six o'clock on Saturday morning they appeared in solid column upon the road, which seems partly parallel to the creek, at McClernand's right. It was a few minutes past six when our pickets exchanged shots with their skirmishers.

Immediately the whole division was astir, waiting for what might turn up. As the rebels neared our forces they deployed and formed in line of battle, making the most furious attack upon the right; also sending their Mississippi sharpshooters, as one of the captains, now a prisoner, informed me, to the left to throw the Eleventh and Twentieth regiments into confusion.

It was about seven o'clock when the firing began on the right, and in a few minutes it was running like a train of powder on a floor, along the entire line. The rebels advanced with determination—not in a regular line, but in the guerilla mode—availing themselves of the trees and the undulations of the ground. Their design was to cut the division at the center, turn the right wing of the division accordingly, and then, after a short struggle, to capture the fort.

But their movements to that end were foiled. The regiments at the center being pressed, after standing hot fire, began gradually to fall back, which rendered it necessary for Oglesby to do the same, as he was engaged from the division, and the entire right wing of the division accordingly was pushed slowly at first. Dresser's and Schwartz's batteries were brought into position as soon as possible, and for a while there was a very heavy fire, accompanied by constant rolls of musketry. If one were to judge by sound alone, all battles would be terrific; but when a light is wafted in the forest, the trees high in, up the branches usually super most. There was, however, considerable loss on both sides at this point.

And now occurred one of those blunders common in war. The enemy pressing hard upon our forces, General McClernand sent Major Brayman for reinforcements. He rode rapidly to the rear and came upon Col. Crafts's brigade, who moved forward, crossed the road, and came up in rear of the Thirtieth and Thirty-first. These regiments were lying down and firing over the crest of a ridge. As Col. Crafts came in rear of them they rose to their feet not knowing whether the force in their rear was friend or foe. The Twenty-fifth Kentucky, supposing them to be rebels, poured in a volley, which did terrible execution. It is not possible to ascertain how many fell under the fire, but it was sufficient to throw the entire division into disorder, and at once there was almost a panic. Some men took to their heels, threw down their guns and equipments, and fled to the rear, crying "All is lost!" "We are all cut to pieces!" and similar expressions. Some of them even fled to Fort Henry, twelve miles distant, and immediately the woods were filled with stragglers.

The enemy improved the opportunity and advanced upon Dresser's and Schwartz's batteries, capturing five guns, taking possession of General McClernand's headquarters, and driving our forces nearly a mile and a half. They had opened the gap, and not only that, but had in the joint drive driven us, captured five guns, and had reason to feel that the day was theirs.

But now they committed a fatal mistake. Instead of adhering to the original plan to escape, they resolved to follow up their advantage by pursuit, cut us up and capture the entire army.

The fight had lasted nearly four hours, and McClernand's division was exhausted—besides, they were out of ammunition.

At this juncture General Wallace's division was thrown in front. They took up a position on a ridge, with Captain Taylor's battery in the center at the road, commanding it down the ridge to the bottom of a ravine. McClernand's division was making up its scattered ranks, ready to support Wallace. It was not long before the rebels formed upon the ridge which General McClernand had occupied through the fight. They were flushed with success, and descended the ridge with the expectation of routing the Yankees. As they came in range, Taylor opened upon them with shell, grape and canister. They quailed before it, advanced a few paces, came to a halt, and as the artillery opened began to fall back. Wallace improved the moment, moved on, drove them before him, regained the lost ground, recovered McClernand's tent and occupied the old ground.

Thus is only a brief note, conveying a general idea. I cannot speak of the prowess of the troops, of instances of individual bravery, although it is generally admitted that Taylor's battery saved the day.

The rebels might have escaped when Wallace was driving them back, but by some fatality neglected the opportunity, and were again brought to a standstill. The day was not thus to close. There was to be a second display of coolness, daring and determined bravery, which the rebels, fighting under the stars and stripes, resolutely refused to make.

The Iowa and Indiana boys, comprising Lanman's brigade, of Smith's division, were ready to do their part in crushing out the rebels, and General Grant, who they should have an opportunity to show their valor. Directly west of Fort Donelson, and beyond the "crescent," there was a second ridge of high rolling hills, which the rebels were determined to hold. The distance across the ridge to the river, as far as I could judge by a somewhat minute survey, was about four miles. The ridge was covered with a dense growth of trees, and a shallow ditch behind and the excavated earth thrown up in front. The western slope of the ridge was quite steep. The distance to the base was thirty rods, as I judged, opening upon a meadow and cornfield. The slope had been forested, but the rebels had used their axes and cut down the trees, forming an open space not impossible to be seen from the river, but a serious obstruction to the advance of an army.

It was desirable that the rebels should be driven out of their pits, for they had commanded Fort Donelson, lying about sixty rods farther east.

The pits were defended by one Mississippi, one Kentucky, and one Tennessee regiment, while other regiments were in position in the rear. The Fort Donelson, in plain sight of the enemy, lay beyond meadow range, and the following diagram will represent the position of the army.

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—24 Ky.

—24th Miss.

Sleeping camp.

—24 Iowa.

—24 Ind.

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